

BLAMES POLICE IF CRIMINALS GET TAXICAB LICENSE

Every Application Held Up
Until Detective Bureau Gives
"O. K.," Says Geraghty.

DOUBTS STORY OF 300.

Says if Enright Has Proof Licenses Will Be Promptly Revoked.

Deputy Commissioner of Licenses James F. Geraghty to-day placed the responsibility of taxi drivers with criminal records operating in New York City in conjunction with armed bandits squarely up to the Police Department, declaring that every applicant for a license to operate a taxicab is passed upon by the Bureau of Criminal Identification at Police Headquarters.

"When an applicant applies at the Division of Motor Vehicles of the Department of Licenses for a license to operate a taxicab in this city," said Commissioner Geraghty, "the must make satisfactory answer to a number of questions, he must file a recent photograph of himself and his fingerprints are taken."

"This data is then sent to Police Headquarters and the applicant is investigated. His fingerprints are compared with those at Headquarters and his photograph is similarly looked up in the Rogues' Gallery. If there is nothing against him, the application is returned to us marked 'record clear' and we issue the license. If the applicant is found to have been convicted of a crime, we are also notified, and consequently the required license is not issued."

Commissioner Geraghty made known that there are now 14,000 licensed taxicab operators in New York City, of which number 3,000 were licensed in the past year. In addition to this number, 2,000 additional licenses were issued to owners of touring cars who desire to "hack."

"When the present Administration took office," said the Deputy Commissioner, "there were only 5,700 licensed taxicab operators, as against 14,000 at the present time."

He was asked his opinion of the recent statement of Police Commissioner Enright that more than 300 ex-criminals operate taxicabs in New York City.

"I do not believe that statement," he replied. "But if such is the case, this condition is clearly up to the Police Department, as this bureau makes no investigation of any applicant, it being the ordinary work of the police."

"It is quite possible to believe, on the other hand," Commissioner Geraghty added, "that there are some criminals operating cabs in the city, because when 7,000 men are licensed in one year there is the strong possibility that some questionable characters are apt to slip by the investigation of the police. But in no sense could I place this number at 300."

"And, if the Police Commissioner knows of 300 criminals who are operating taxicabs, I am of the opinion that the Automobile Bureau of the Secretary of State's office as well as this department, should be informed in order that we may take steps to revoke the licenses these ex-criminals hold."

"To the best of my recollection I have never been advised that such a condition exists," said Mr. Geraghty. "Secretary of State Hugo in a statement also denied that he had been favored by any information from the Police Commissioner regarding ex-criminals driving automobiles in New York City."

"If I had received such information," said Mr. Geraghty, "I would immediately have taken steps to revoke the licenses of those mentioned by the police officials. As it is, the only information we get from the Police Department deals with reports of violations of the Motor Vehicle Law. These complaints are heard by me at frequent intervals, and proper action in the matter of revocation of licenses is subsequently taken."

"In the questions asked the applicant for a chauffeur's license appears, 'Have you ever been convicted of any crime?' If the applicant answers in the negative, why, we must be more or less governed by his statement. Certainly, the Police Department never tells us anything about it one way or the other, because that department does not enter into the procedure at all."

"We never knowingly issue either an operator's or chauffeur's license to any individual who has ever been found guilty of any crime, but as I say, we have no means of making an investigation. If the Police Department furnishes us with information as to who these ex-criminal operators are, we will immediately take steps to have their licenses revoked."

Mr. Hugo added that, beginning Feb. 1, a new form of application blank for a chauffeur's license will go into effect, which, he said, would make it more difficult for questionable characters to obtain licenses.

"On the new forms," he said, "there are to be thirty-six questions as against fourteen printed on the blanks used last year. These new forms were drawn up as the result of conferences between Magistrates of the Traffic Court, members of automobile associations and representatives from my office."

In view of the assertions of Commissioner Geraghty and Secretary Hugo, it would appear that although Commissioner Enright knows that 300 ex-criminals are operating taxicabs in this city, he nor the members of the Police Department have made any effort to have the licenses of these men revoked or steps been taken to put an end to the ever-growing list of daring hold-ups and robberies accomplished with the aid of taxicabs and touring cars.

In almost every report of a robbery or hold-up, where thieves have stolen thousands of dollars, and there have been many crimes of this kind during 1919, it is set forth "the robbers made their escape in a waiting automobile, the license number of which could not be ascertained because the tail lights on the machine were not lit."

According to figures made public

by burglary insurance companies, plunder from robberies committed during 1919 in this city amounted to \$25,000,000. It is safe to say at least one-fourth the number of these robberies were made possible by "the waiting taxicab," which spirited the robbers and their plunder away almost under the noses of the police.

Take at random any of the big burglaries within the last year. The taxicab and touring car has played a conspicuous part. "Red" Hope and his gang of bandits terrorized New York and burglarized hotels by the half score with the aid of a "hack" touring car. The gunman who robbed the East Brooklyn Savings Bank escaped in a waiting automobile; the Colonial Bank was robbed by auto bandits; George Alexander, the Washington Market poultry dealer, was held up, brutally beaten and robbed of \$40,000 by automobile bandits, and but a few days ago a woman was dragged into a taxicab and robbed and beaten by the driver of a city licensed taxi. And the long list continues indefinitely.

GIRL KILLED BY BUS.

Driver Paroled for Hearing Later on Manslaughter Charge.

Helen Busch, six, of No. 788 Jersey Avenue, Jersey City, while with her mother, Mrs. Clara Busch, at Montgomery and Washington Streets, was run over and killed this morning by a jitney bus, driven by Morris Otero, twenty-five, and owned by Frederick Less, both of No. 47 Stevens Avenue.

Otero was paroled for a later hearing by the Second Criminal Court on a charge of manslaughter.

Frank Marallo, No. 75 Gates Avenue, Jersey City, was struck by a Pennsylvania locomotive and instantly killed this morning when he tried to cross through West Side Avenue while the gate was down.

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According to figures made public

Macy's

34th Street, 34th to 35th St.
We Sell Dependable Merchandise at Prices Lower Than Any Other Store, but for Cash Only

Clearance of junior Boys' Blue Serge Suits \$8.94

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In all-wool Junior Norfolk serge models that button to the neck and have white detachable collars and black bow ties. Made in pleated or fancy patch pocket effects. Coats and trousers lined throughout. Sizes 4 to 10.

100 Boys' Sweaters \$3.89

All-wool sweaters made with Byron collars and finished with pockets. Colors blue, brown, maroon and khaki.

—Second Floor, 34th Street, Rear.

Reduction sale of women's suits

Tailored and fur trimmed models in the season's smartest fabrics. All lined and warmly interlined. Taken from our regular stock.

Suits originally priced \$59.75 \$44.75

Suits originally priced \$74.75 \$49.75

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Clearance of 60 suits

Broadcloths
Velours
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Gloves! Gloves!

Women's gray pull-on duplex chamois-finished lisle gloves, half pique sewn, double draw back. Strap with clasp at wrist, keeping the hand snug and warm.

Price \$1.59

—Main Floor, Leont, 35th Street.



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You know how gladly we make good if something goes wrong.

For 85 out of every 100 men—"Pedestrians," the last that's first for comfort.

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Everything men and boys wear. Also luggage and Sporting Goods.

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IF it is true that the stars are the lamps of the heavens, it is also true that a well chosen lamp lends a touch of the heavens to the home. At Ovington's a wide selection awaits you at very attractive prices.

OVINGTON'S
"The Gift Shop of Fifth Ave."
314 Fifth Ave., near 32d St.



ONE OF 300 NECCO SWEETS

New England Confectionery Company

BOSTON, MASS.

Clearance sale of 89 misses' high grade suits

Trimmed with beaver, natural squirrel, taupe, wolf, Australian opossum, nutria.
Materials yalama, silk duvetyn, duvet de laine.

\$124.00

originally priced up to
\$289.00

\$98.75

originally priced up to
\$239.00

\$79.75

originally priced up to
\$189.00

\$69.75

originally priced up to
\$139.00

This group consists of velvets, silvertones, Yalama cloth, velour checks, tinsel tones, wool velours, duvo-checks.

\$44.75

originally priced up to
\$94.75

—Third Floor—35th Street

The January Sale of White

grows in popularity

NIGHTGOWNS

Gowns of gainsock, both white and flesh colored, lace and embroidery trimmed.

94c to \$2.79

Gowns of cotton crepe, plain flesh and bluebird designs.

\$1.79

—Third Floor.

BLOUSES

\$1.69—white, novelty and colored voiles. Low necks and Peter Pan collars.

\$2.59—colored and white batiste, colored organdie. Bound buttonholes.

SPECIAL ITEMS

Negligees, breakfast coats and dressing gowns of light materials. 89c to \$4.24

Housedresses, 12 different styles, percales and chambrays. \$2.79

Petticoats of flowered satens, silk and cotton mixtures and taffeta. \$1.59 to \$4.29

Brassieres, fancy pink meshes, brocades, satins trimmed with wide bands of lace. 39c to \$1.49

Children's drawers, trimmed with Hamburg and lace edging, straight and knickerbocker styles; 2 to 14 years. 54c, 69c & 89c



Taupe nutria and natural raccoon shawl collars on these coats for misses and small women

Special

\$37.75

All silk lined—
Sizes 14 to 20

Materials—Plumette and Silvertones.

Styles—Two Belted Models with new and attractive features.

Colors—Reindeer, brown, taupe, Pekin and navy.

—Third Floor, 35th Street, Front.

Imported from England
new and warm are these
boys' Jersey suits
\$6.74 & \$7.94

All-wool knitted jersey with standing collar buttoning on the shoulder or with a Byron collar buttoning in front. Short trousers that little boys will like. Tailored with unusual smartness. In blue, green and brown.

—Second Floor, 34th Street, Rear.

Ostrich Feather Turbans

\$2.97

\$2.97



Hats suitable for practical and dress wear in the becoming close-fitting shapes. Many of the new shades are here for your choice. Mahogany, navy, purple, tete de negre, Alice, beaver and taupe.

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